

**THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE  
PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:**

- 5    1. A method of cryogenic treatment of tungsten carbide  
containing cobalt, comprising the steps of:  
          pre-treating tungsten carbide containing cobalt with  
microwave sintering, thereby changing the properties of the  
tungsten carbide;
- 10        lowering the temperature of the microwave sintered  
tungsten carbide gradually to cryogenic levels; and  
          raising the temperature of the microwave sintered  
tungsten carbide gradually back to ambient temperatures.
- 15    2. The method as defined in Claim 1, in which the microwave  
sintered tungsten carbide is held at cryogenic levels to  
permit cryogenic penetration into the microwave sintered  
tungsten carbide, prior to the raising of the microwave  
sintered tungsten carbide back to ambient temperatures.